

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4873

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1773

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AG

SUBJECT: FRENCH/ALGERIAN RELATIONS: MURDER OF
MONSEIGNEUR JACQUIER

1. WHILE GOA'S STATEMENT OF CAPTURE OF MURDERER OF MSGR.
JACQUIER REPORTED OUR 1742 WAS INTENDED CLOSE THE AFFAIR,
A NUMBER OF DOUBTS PERSIST IN EUROPEAN COMMUNITY THAT THE
MAN IN QUESTION IS A LUNATIC AS CLAIMED BY GOA. PAPAL NUNCIO SYS
HE SUSPECTS MAN WAS RELIGIOUS FANATIC, BEHIND WHOM WAS SOME ANTI-
CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION OR GROUP WHICH HE UNABLE IDENTIFY. CARDINAL
DUVAL IS REPORTED TO HAVE SID THERE WERE TWO VERSIONS OF AFFAIR,
THAT OF POLICE AND THAT OF THE PEOPLE. HE WAS INCLINED TO BELIEVE
PEOPLE. FRENCH AMBASSADOR CONFIDENT REGIME NOT INVOLVED,
BUT UNWILLING DISMISS CARDINAL'S VIEW OUT OF HAND. LOWER
RANKS OF CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY REPORTEDLY MUCH DISTURBED
AND UNWILLING ACCEPT OFFICIAL VERSION OF EVENTS.

2. POINT ON WHICH "PEOPLE'S VERSION" TURNS IS ALLEGATION
BY ONE WITNESS THAT MURDERER WAS DRIVEN UP TO SCENE IN CAR
BY ANOTHER MAN AND WAITED UNTIL MONSEIGNEUR JACQUIER
ARRIVED. MURDERER GOT OUT OF CAR, STABBED JACQUIER,
THEN RAN BACK TO CAR AND WAS DRIVEN OFF BY HIS ACCOMPLICE.
THIS TAKEN AS INDICATING HE MEMBER OF ORGANIZATION.
TOGETHER WITH SUCH INCIDENTS AS UNEXPLAINED CLOSURE BY GOA OF
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LIBRARY MAINTAINED BY DOMINICAN FATHERS AND BRIEF

OCCUPATION OF ALGIERS, ORAN AND ANNABA BASILICAS BY GENDARMERIE LAST WINTER THIS INCIDENT HAS GIVEN RISE TO FEARS IN EUROPEAN COMMUNITY THAT, WHATEVER REGIME'S PUBLIC POSTURE MAY BE, THERE ARE FANATICS IN POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE WHO ARE INTENT ON DRIVING OUT CHRISTIANS AND WHO ARE BEING TOLERATED BY REGIME.

3. SUCH CONCERNS, WHILE THEY MAY APPEAR PARANOID OR HYSTERICAL, ARE UNDERSTANDABLE IN CLOSED SOCIETY SUCH AS ALGERIA'S, PARTICULARLY GIVEN CURRENT STATE OF FRENCH- ALGERIAN RELATIONS. PENDING

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE "PEOPLE'S VERSION" SHOULD BE TREATED WITH RESERVE AND THAT GOA EXPLANATION THAT JACQUIER'S MURDER WAS WORK OF LUNTIC SHOULD BE ACCEPTED. SUSPECT THAT IF THERE WAS CREDIBLE WITNESS WHO SAW ACCOMPLICE AND CAR , POLICE WOULD MAKE EFFORT TO TRACK HIM DOWN AND WOULD FIND HIM.

4. ALGERIAN SECURITY OFFICER VOLUNTEERED COMMENT TO DCM THAT ALGERIANS COULD NEVER OVERCOME FRENCH CONTEMPT AND CITED RUMORS ABOUT ASSASSIN AS EXAMPLE. HE STATED THAT ARRESTED MURDERER OF JACQUIER WAS WANTED IN FRANCE FOR MURDER AND THAT GOA HAD RECEIVED INTERPOL FILE ON HIM AS WELL. HERE, HE SAID, WAS CLEAR CASE WHERE ALGERIANS HAD GONE ALL OUT TO DO THEIR DUTY, HAD STAKED OUT ALL CHURCHES, AND HAD ARRESTED MRUDERER, BUT FRENCH WERE JUST NEVER READY TO BELIEVE FACTS; "THEY WILL ALWAYS DESPISE US," HE CONCLUDED. PARKER

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